

EUA Funding Forum 2026

Reform under pressure: scalable approaches from
Ukraine's research and autonomy overhaul

From Policy to Practice: Scaling Learning, Not Models An Estonia–Ukraine Dialogue on University Autonomy and Reform



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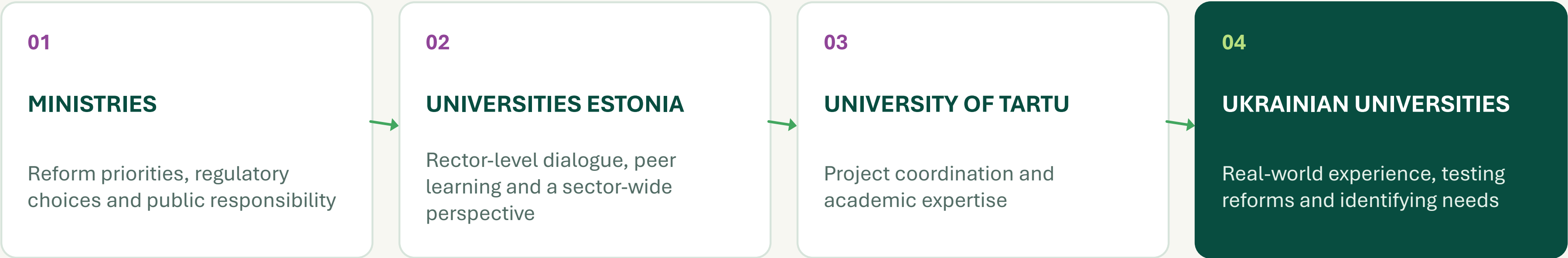


ESTDEV



Connecting policy reform with university practice

One shared conversation across partners



WHAT THIS PRODUCED	2 analytical reports (tb published)	Visits & peer exchange	Reform dialogue
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From Foundations to Transformations:

Phase 1 and 2 of the Governance Experiment at Zaporizhzhia National University

Prof. Galina SHILO
Rector



1930

ZNU: Facts and Figures





ZNU: Key Challenges for Frontline Universities During the War

- 1) Extreme uncertainty
- 2) Loss of students and human capital
- 3) Damage to physical infrastructure
 - 6 targeted attacks in 2026
 - Over 80% of campus infrastructure damaged, with 40% damaged significantly or destroyed beyond repair
 - Documented losses over UAH 400 mln
- 4) Financial instability and limited resources
- 5) Disruptions to education and research
- 6) Psychological stress and staff burnout
- 7) Threats to institutional sustainability



Phase 1: Building the Foundations



Institutional capacity



Diagnosis

academic portfolio,
research, institutional
processes



Tools

digital management,
governance, audit



Policies

integrity, quality
assurance, strategy

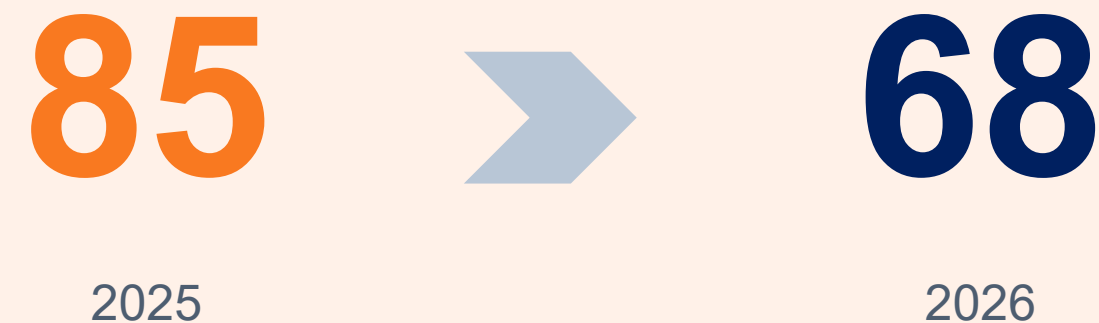


Zaporizhzhia National University

Optimisation of academic programmes and structure

Evidence-based changes to the educational portfolio | 2025 to 2026

Bachelor's programmes



Master's programmes



NEW EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES



STRUCTURAL OPTIMISATION

Merged and reorganised departments offering programmes in the same fields of study.

Stronger academic staff capacity • no internal competition during admissions



Underground campus: a concept for continuity

University resilience and safe learning spaces under extreme pressure

CONCEPT



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Phase 2: Institutional Transformation



Level 1. Strategic Governance and Accountability

strategy, governance architecture, KPI/OKR, risk management



Level 2. Academic Quality and Institutional Capacity

portfolio review, research priorities, digital governance, QA & integrity



Level 3. Human Capital and Organisational Development

HR policy, grading, performance management, staff development



Level 4. Institutional and Financial Sustainability

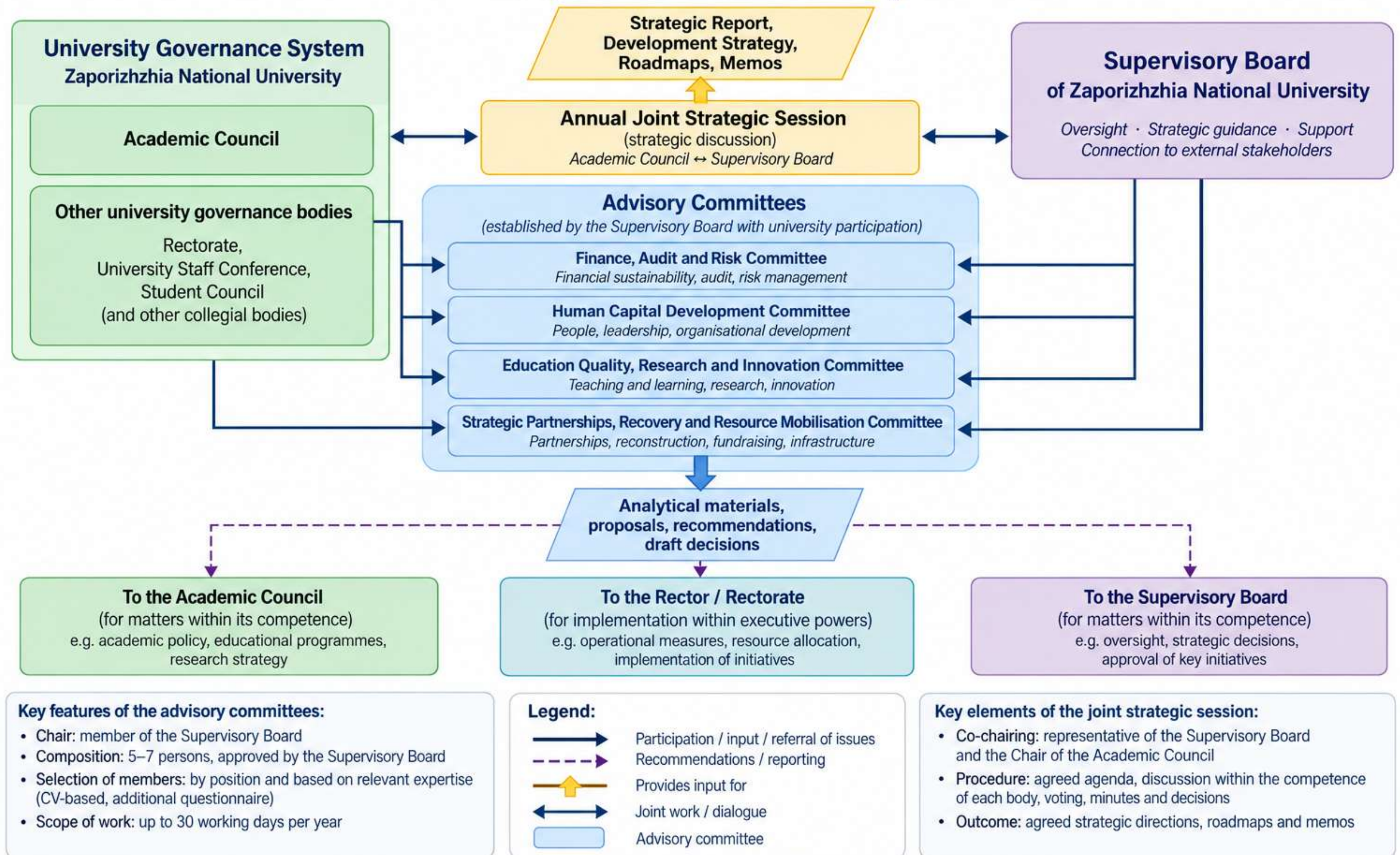
diversified revenues, endowment, property and investment management



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Level 1. Strategic Governance and Accountability

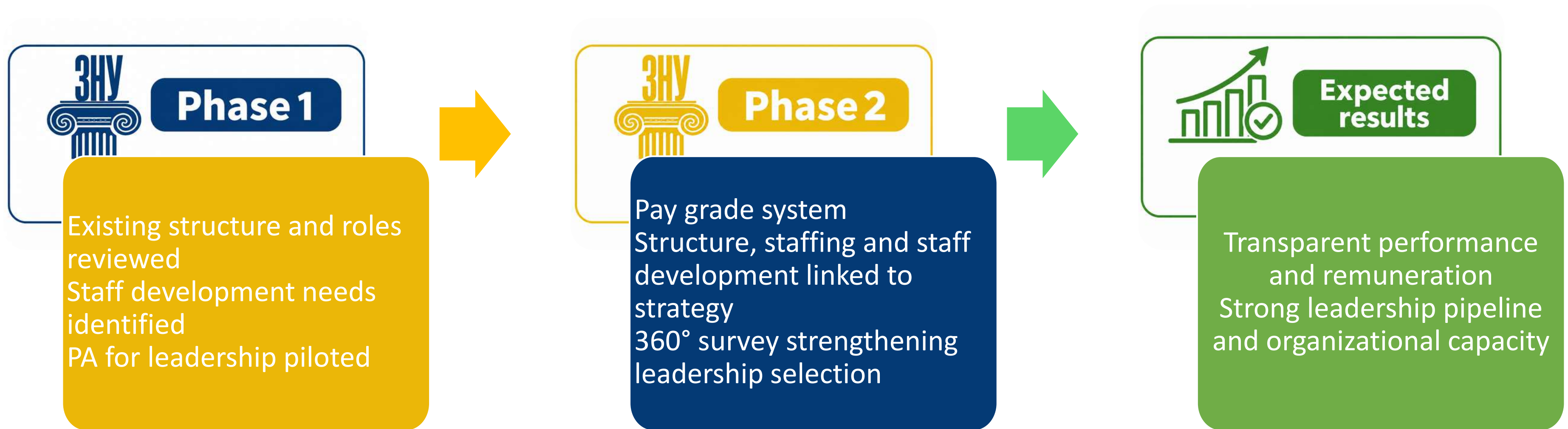


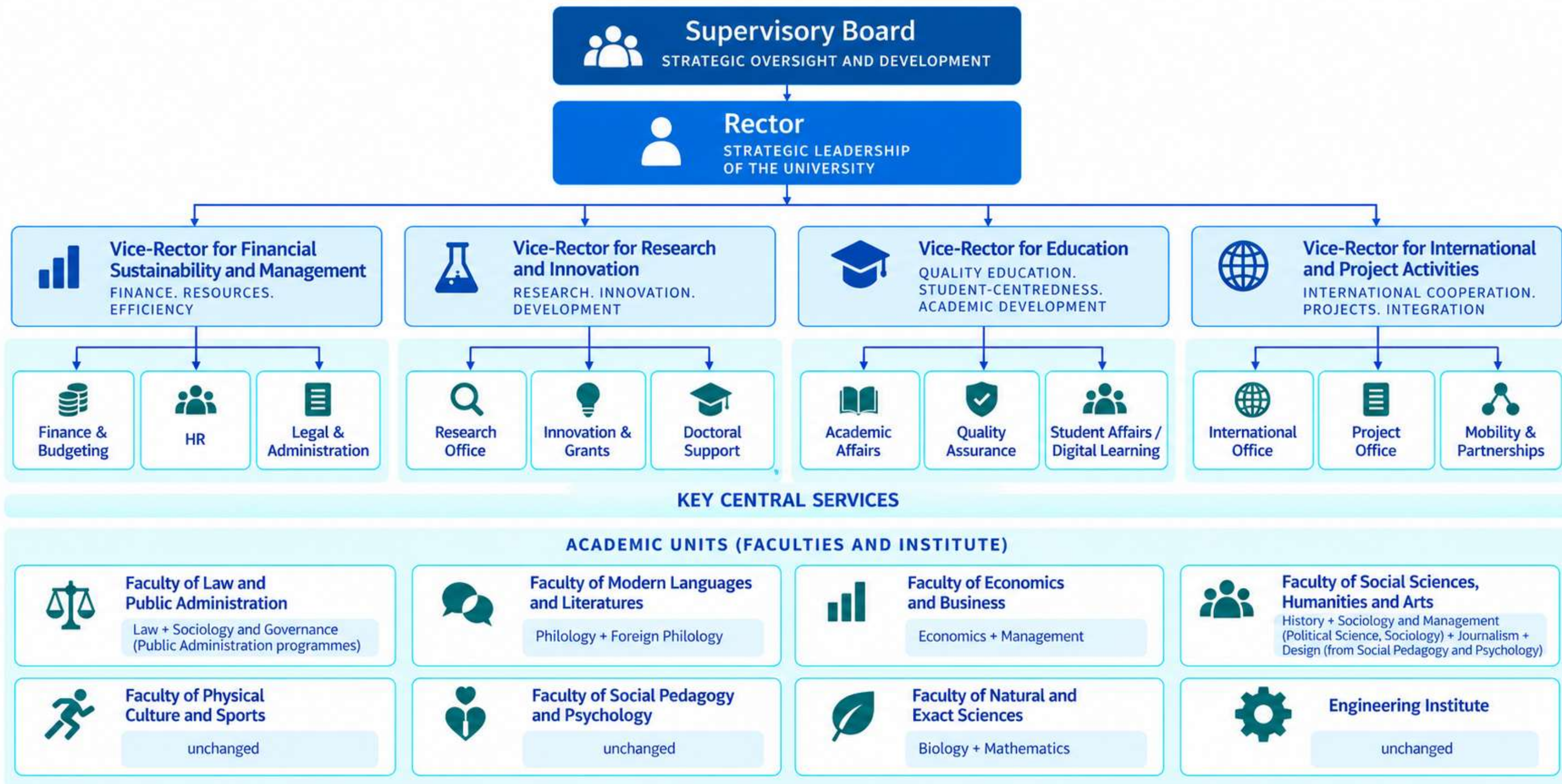


Level 2. Academic Quality and Institutional Capacity

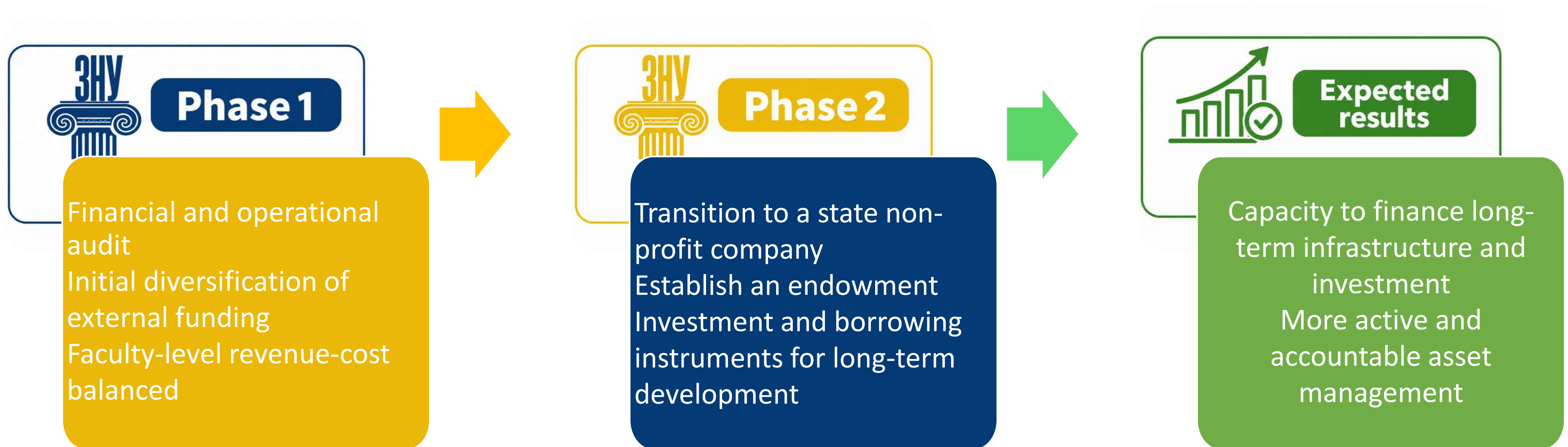


Level 3. Human Capital and Organizational Development



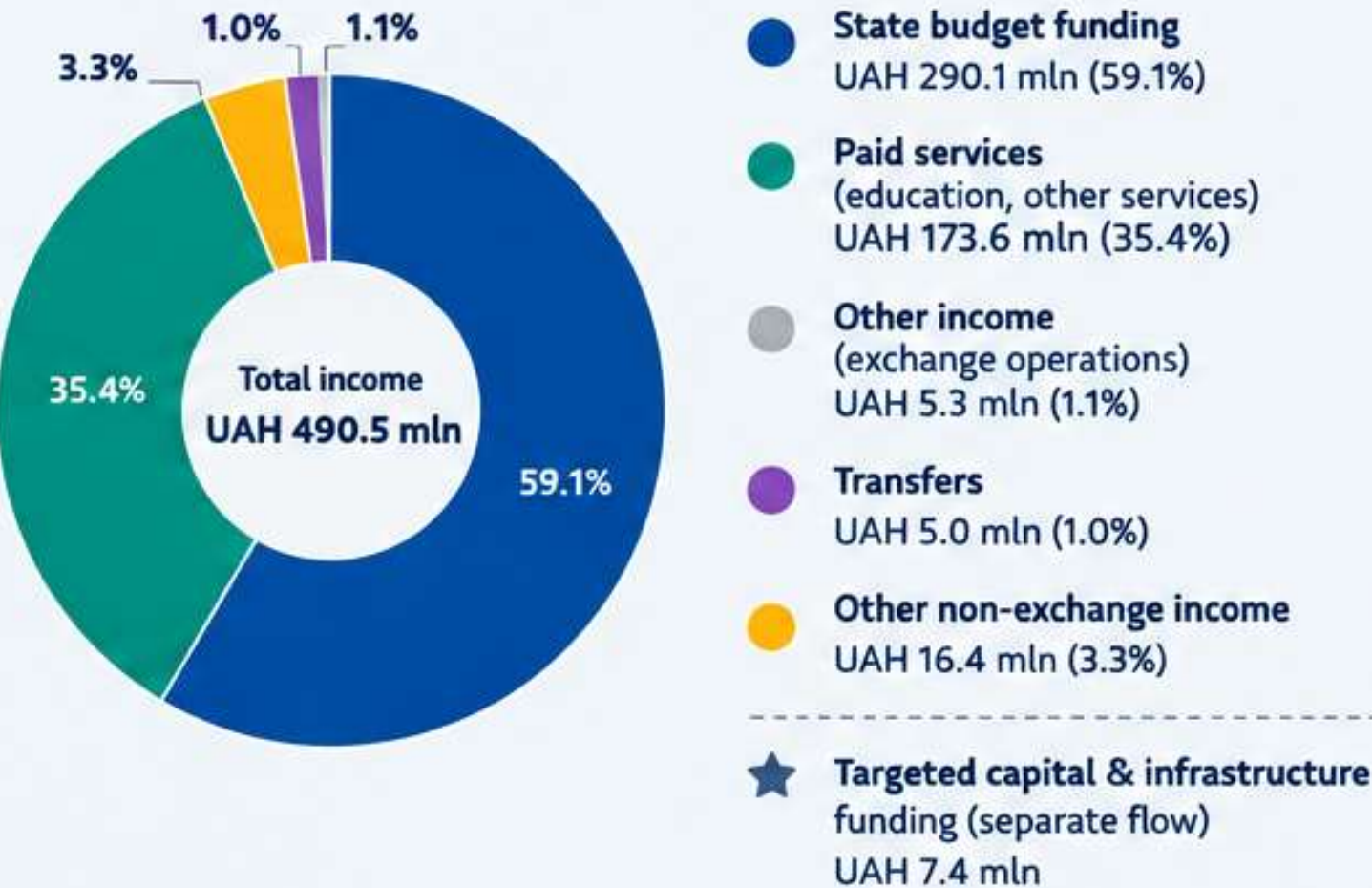


Level 4. Financial Autonomy and Institutional Sustainability



Current model (2025)

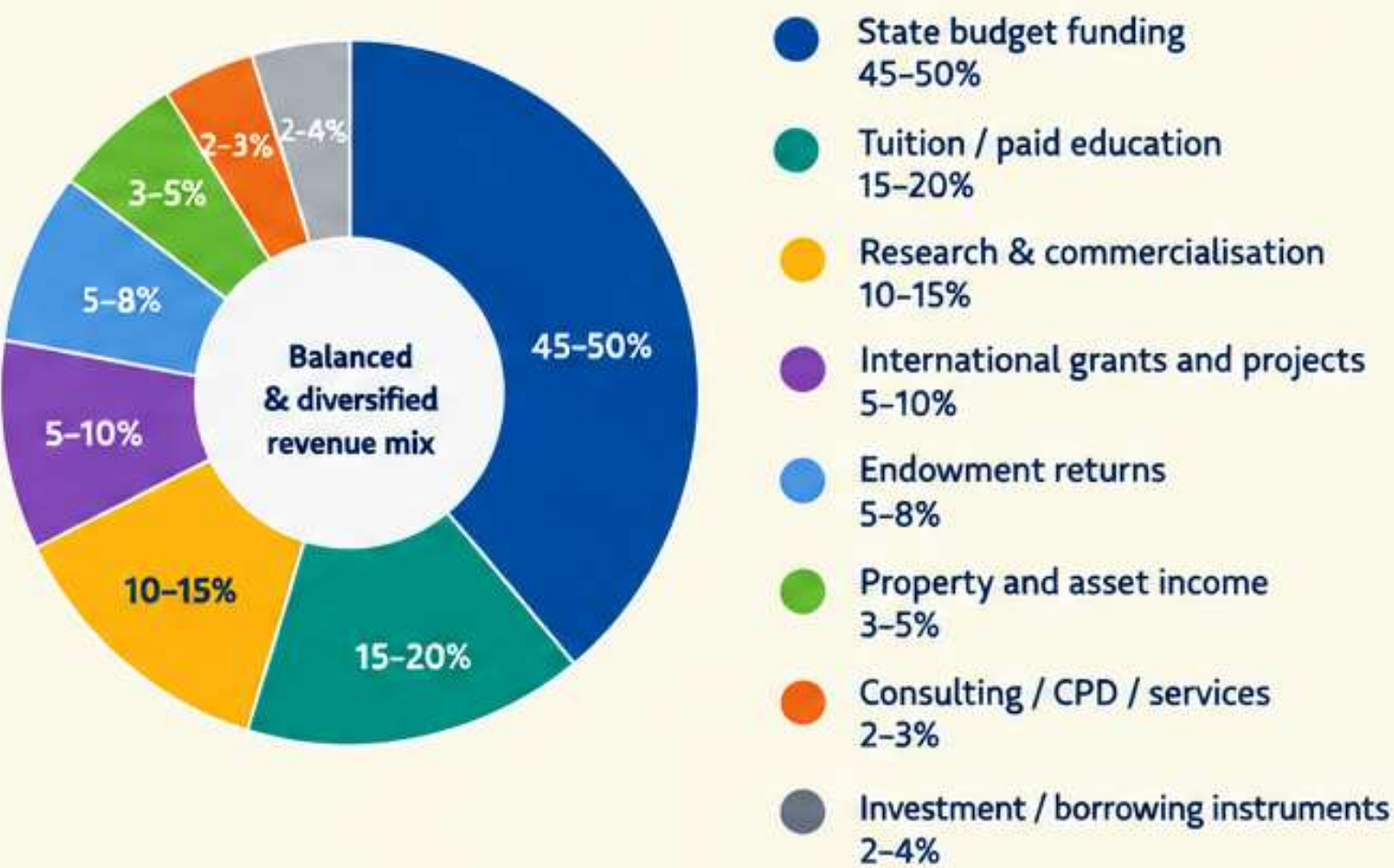
High dependence on state funding and paid services



! **Key issue:** 35.4% of total income comes from paid services, creating a high dependence on tuition and other service revenues.

Target model (Phase 2)

Diversified, resilient and sustainable funding base



✓ **Result:** reduced dependence on paid services, new long-term income streams and **greater financial autonomy.**

Key changes enabled by the new regulatory framework



Endowment
Permanent capital for long-term stability



Transition to a state non-profit company
More flexibility in financial and asset management



Commercialisation vehicles
Legal entities for innovation and technology transfer



Investment & borrowing instruments
Funding for strategic infrastructure and development



Property management
Active use and transactions with real estate



Integrated governance
Financial planning, internal and external audit

Scale the learning, not the model

Every university has its own story, constraints and ambitions.



OUR NEXT CHALLENGE

01

Start with purpose

What is this university trying to change — and why?

02

Make leadership exchange deeper

Create honest, practical rector-to-rector learning — including what did not work.

03

Shorten the learning cycle

Make experimentation, open reflection and timely correction part of reform.

Authority + instruments + accountability + trust

Where EUA and its members could support Phase 2

Practical expertise, tools and partnerships for university autonomy reform



EXPERT REVIEW AND EVALUATION

EUA Solutions + Institutional Evaluation Programme: governance model, reform outcomes



MONITORING AND EFFICIENCY

University Autonomy Scorecard + University Efficiency Hub: progress, restructuring, planning



LEADERSHIP, QUALITY AND TOOLKITS

Leadership Programme + Leadership Academy + QA Thematic Peer Groups + ATHENA tools



DIRECT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Amidex Foundation: fundraising; Atlantic TU: financial planning; Estonian universities: governance and HR

Expert reviews • mentoring • workshops • short staff exchanges

OUR PROPOSAL Explore a joint Erasmus+ Capacity Building project

Pilot universities + the Ministry + EUA + European partners | ZNU as a frontline autonomy case study



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